The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor concerning the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 16, 1912, at the Post Office in Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 11, 1918.

WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1772 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 1945 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 35, NO. 13

More TVA's To Prepare For Post-War Supported By AFL In Radio Debate

Washington, D. C.—Strong support for the creation of more TVA's in some of the great river valleys of the nation during post-war years was advanced in the AFL's "America United" radio forum.

David E. Lilienthal, chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority, said: "The one place where there is the most no debate about the TVA idea is among the people of the Tennessee Valley. Take the businessmen, for example, and their local Chambers of Commerce. They are, almost without exception, enthusiastic supporters of this undertaking; more than that, it's the Valley's businessmen who have carried the ball in power distribution, navigation development, promotion of new industries and so on.

"Organized labor in the Valley has always been and is still today behind in support of the TVA idea. Farmers, individually and through their organization, have carried the ball hard for in the TVA program of soil building, improved farming, rural electrification, and small rural industries. Governors of the Valley states and city and county officials have played an active part in this enterprise; they are emphatic in saying that TVA's policies have not interfered with local government or states rights.

"You can't get into much of a debate over TVA in the Tennessee Valley, among the people who are closest to TVA, whether you talk with bankers, labor leaders, or farmers."

Phil Pearl representing the AFL, declared labor regards the TVA as a monument to the skill and the genius and the hard work of the members of its building trades and industrial unions who constructed the TVA dams and power stations. Added that, he pointed out, TVA has lifted wage and living standards in a large area where conditions were for many years depressed.

Mr. Lilienthal interjected:

"I think every American can be proud of the record of organized labor on that job, which happens to be the largest single job of engineering and construction in the history of our country, because during that long period, under contracts with labor, there have been the best of relations and there have been no interruptions due to strikes."

Dr. Emerson P. Schmidt, representing the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, admitted that the TVA has given business a boost in the area and William R. Ogg, representing the American Farm Bureau Federation, conceded that TVA has helped farmers replenish the fertility of their soil and has protected them from disastrous floods. Rash, however, was somewhat hesitant about endorsing the initiation of projects similar to TVA in other river valleys.

When Dr. Schmidt touched on the danger of too great Government spending, Mr. Pearl rejoined:

"There is quite a difference, and you as a business man should recognize it, between spending and investment. One of the great TVA assets that TVA was a wise investment has happened since the war began. It would have been impossible for America to produce the vast quantities of war planes, munitions and aluminum that we have produced in the last few years without the power generated by TVA."

"But we are not going to have any more wars, are we?" Dr. Schmidt asked somewhat ironically.

"The point is," Mr. Pearl replied, when we don't have any more wars we have to apply the equipment we have to the uses of peace and develop a better life for ourselves and our children."

In another spirited exchange, Dr. Schmidt remarked that the "yardstick" idea inherent in the TVA had little scientific validity because of the difference between coast and interior. "This is a private utility and a Government-operated river valley development.

"The TVA has been a yardstick for the entire country," Mr. Pearl retorted. "It has reduced power rates tremendously. There is no longer any question of that. And it is a yardstick now for the development of America. If we have any pioneering spirit left in America the way to apply it is to use the advances of science to tame the wild and destructive forces and put them to work for the betterment of the common man."

AFL Organizer, Now A Fighting G. I., Says Soldiers Favor Trade Unions

Washington, D. C.—One of the great war mysteries is what American soldiers and sailors overseas think about organized labor and what they propose to do about it when they get home after the war ends. A great deal has been written about the subject, mostly from anti-union sources of labor baiting variety, but little that has received a pat on the back. The following letter received by AFL Organization Director Frank Fenton helps to clear up some of the mystery and should be read carefully by all labor haters:

"Dear Brother Fenton:

"From somewhere in France, PFC Walter L. Mitchell, a combat infantryman and former AFL organizer now on leave of absence from the Federation, wishes to report. After months of combat, in which I have experienced many of the horrors of modern warfare, I have become a brief but welcome respite from foxholes in a 24-hour rest camp, where again I thank God for watching over me and write my first overseas letter to you.

"It has been my privilege to discuss the war, post-war, peace and home front situation with the GI's in the ranks of life. G. I.s from union families, from non-union industries, from non-union and anti-union industries and G. I.s from the farm—all live and pray and fight for the day when they can return home and go back to work and live normally again.

"These boys have all learned, the hard way, what organization means. They all know that only through united effort, unity of purpose and personal sacrifice can any objective be taken and held.

"It is my belief, contrary to the anti-union propaganda at home, that our unions are safe from the threat of G. I. destruction. Instead of the 'predicted' death for unions, there will be an influx of new, rugged and, at times, reckless blood which will help to satisfy our every need. Never will any serviceman forget that the best organized outfit wins!

"We of the American Federation of Labor must be on the alert that discharged servicemen are not misled in choosing their organization. The organization that has led the battle for economic advancement for working people throughout peace and war years should and will be the chosen organization for well-informed veterans on their return to employment."

Bailey Bill, Banning Royalties, Would Hit Health, Insurance Funds

Washington, D. C.—Senator Josiah W. Bailey, who hails from North Carolina and believes that all American workers should be drafted and regimented by the Government, introduced a new kind of antilabor bill which would outlaw employer payments to a union for any purpose other than a straight checkoff of dues.

Sen. Bailey admitted his bill was aimed at President John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers Union and President James C. Petrillo of the American Federation of Musicians.

Lewis is making a 10-cent-a-ton royalty from the operators for a health insurance fund to protect sick and injured mine workers. Petrillo has already won a royalty of a fraction of a cent per record from recording companies for a fund to provide free public concerts and employ idle musicians.

Actually, however, Bailey's bill would go far beyond banning such royalties, union chiefs said. If enacted, it would hit health insurance funds already established in many industries through collective bargaining between unions and employers.

Several unions—notably the Hatters and the Ladies' Garment Workers—have negotiated agreements under which employers pay 2 to 3 per cent of their payrolls into health funds, administered either by the unions or jointly by the unions and employers.

These are used to pay sickness and accident benefits, medical costs, hospital expenses and death benefits for employes covered by the agreements.

Similar pacts have been secured by the Upholsterers and the Furniture Workers' unions and the idea is spreading.

These and other similar gains by unions would be wiped out under the Bailey bill, labor spokesmen said.

However, Joseph A. Padway, AFL counsel, declared constitutionality of the North Carolina Senator's measure.

"We don't believe that the collective bargaining rights of workers—even if they secure benefits in hitherto unheard-of fashion—can be 'circumscribed by such legislation," Padway declared.

FULL EMPLOYMENT MEANS HEALTHY SOCIETY—McNUTT

New York City.—Maintaining that "full employment is the difference between a healthy society and a sick society open to the virus of a new fascism and a new war," Paul V. McNutt, Federal Security Administrator and chairman of the War Manpower Commission, declared that "there is a definite hope for a 60,000,000-job America" in the post-war period.

Mr. McNutt said all Americans must be protected against unemployment as they are protected against robbery, fire and violence at home. He said that protection against unemployment "is a double protection that will also guard our society against such psychological phobias as Jew-baiting, Negro-baiting and Labor-baiting."

Guaranteed Annual Wage Sought By FDR Inquiry

Washington, D. C.—President Roosevelt ordered an official study made of the possibility of extending throughout American industry a guaranteed annual wage, one of the main aspirations of American workers.

The study will be made by the advisory board to the Office of War Mobilization, composed of labor, management, agriculture and government representatives, and on which President William Green represents the AFL.

The President acted upon request of the National War Labor Board which said that increasing interest in a guaranteed annual wage "is part of the search for continuity of employment which is, perhaps, the most vital economic and social objective in our times."

Several AFL unions have succeeded in instituting annual wage plans in a few industries but management, in most cases, has been extremely reluctant to undertake the responsibility of guaranteeing employment and wages over periods even of one year.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor made public a survey which indicates that the annual wage idea, while growing, has made little headway against management opposition.

The report showed that approximately 625,000 workers are covered by guaranteed employment or annual wages. Most of the workers receiving the guaranteed wage are employed in consumers goods, service and distributive industries BLS declared.

"Although there are a few outstanding examples in manufacturing companies for considerable size, the total number of employes in manufacturing industries who are covered by agreements providing guaranteed employment is very small, about 72,500," the report disclosed.

"Broadly, the plans provided in current employer-union agreements are of two kinds," BLS revealed, "those guaranteeing employment and those guaranteeing annual wages. The employment-guarantee plans specify the number of weeks or hours of work to be provided employes each year without specifying the amount of earnings to be received. In other words, what is guaranteed is a year's job with the total annual earnings left a variable. Under annual wage plans, the employe is guaranteed a weekly income throughout the year regardless of daily or seasonal fluctuation in employment. Actually, the distinction between guaranteed employment and annual wage plans is one of emphasis only, or if the employer cannot furnish sufficient work to fulfill the contract, wages must be paid for the balance of the time guaranteed."

About 6,000 union contracts in manufacturing industries were examined, and found that 3,550 contain some form of guaranteed employment or annual wage plan covering 142 companies. Eighty-eight of these companies, employing about 5,850 workers, now guarantee a full year's employment or wages, the remaining 54 companies, employing about 6,500 workers, provide guarantees of less than one year.

"Most of the contracts studied," BLS said, "have qualifications which allow cancellation or modification under specified circumstances and which extend the guarantee to only a limited number of employes."

AFL Helps Draft Seniority Policy To Speed Employment of Veterans

Washington, D. C.—Acting to head off any move to pit war veterans against civilian workers in the post-war economic battle, the labor movement is participating in a concerted effort to settle once and for all thorny questions on seniority.

The American Federation of Labor prevailed upon Brig. Gen. Frank T. Hines, head of the veterans' administration, to establish a joint committee of labor, industry and servicemen's organization representatives to draft a clear-cut seniority policy. The labor representatives named by General Hines were headed by AFL President William Green and include CIO and railroad Brotherhood spokesmen.

The AFL has repeatedly made it clear that it opposes any other system of seniority for the time they have served in the armed forces and many AFL unions have entered into reemployment centers for war veterans. Some over-eager representatives of veteran organizations, however, have tried to claim super-seniority for servicemen which would permit them to displace workers with lifelong seniority preference and even rehire of the first World War.

Union chiefs described establishment of the committee as a hopeful sign that differences over a reemployment of veterans may be ironed out at the conference table without bitter clashes in the post-war period. Negotiations are already under way within the committee for a policy on protecting and extending job opportunities for returning service men.

Meanwhile, a showdown is looming among government agencies over the question of "super-seniority" for veterans.

Some time ago, an American Legion official, while working in Selective Service, put out a ruling sustaining such "super-seniority." Other veterans' organizations are strongly opposing the interpretation, however, contending that under it, men who served in this war could "bump" from jobs veterans of the first World War. Union spokesmen and most employers have likewise condemned the ruling. They maintain it is misinterpreting the Selective Service Act and may lead to chaos in industry after the war.

The issue has been put before the 12-man advisory council of the Reemployment and Retraining Administration for a decision.

NLRB, Reversing Itself Again, Permits Foremen To Join Unions

Washington, D. C.—The National Labor Relations Board which has reversed itself so many times that it is now completely dizzy, has now ruled that foremen and other supervisory employes are entitled to the protection of the Wagner Act and can form unions or join unions.

The board had so decided some years ago in the Union Collieries case. Only a few months ago, however, it overruled its own decision and held in the Maryland Drydock case that foremen could not be grouped into "appropriate" units for collective bargaining purposes, thereby depriving them of representation by strikes called by "independent" foremen's organizations in the Detroit area.

So now, by a two to one majority, the board has come around again to the conclusion that foremen and supervisory employes are entitled to organization, just as the labor movement of labor had contended all along.

In announcing its decision, the board majority, with Gerald Reilly dissenting, said:

"The nation has now experienced the drastic consequences of extra-statutory organization by supervisory employes and the duty of the board has become plain. To continue to deny to such employes a class the bargaining rights by the act would be to ignore the clear economic threat and invite further industrial strife—a thing which the nation can ill afford at this time and which the act was designed to mitigate."

65-CENT WAGE 'FLOOR' PROPOSED BY SENATORS

Washington, D. C.—A joint resolution directing the National War Labor Board, in passing on requests for wage increases, to consider any rate below 65 cents an hour as "substandard," was offered in the Senate this week by Senators Claude Pepper, Robert M. LaFollette and Olin D. Johnston.

The proposed rate, Pepper said, is the rock-bottom minimum for decent living. That fact, he recalled, was demonstrated by the Labor Board itself in granted a minimum of 50 cents an hour, and has now boosted the "floor" to 55 cents.

ELECTRICAL WORKERS WIN PLANT IN WORCESTER

Worcester, Mass.—The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (AFL) won a decisive victory in an NLRB election held here among the employes of the Cornell-Doubilier Co.

When the ballots were counted, the totals showed that 825 workers favored the AFL union as their collective bargaining representative while 168 voted for no union.

PERKINS URGES BAN ON INDUSTRIAL HOMEWORK

Washington, D. C.—Secretary of Labor Perkins urged all states to abolish "industrial homework" and thus weed out the last refuge of the sweatshop.

In a letter to state labor commissioners, she hailed the recent United States Supreme Court decision sustaining the power of the administrator of the Wage-Hour Act to outlaw such homework in all industries engaged in interstate commerce.

Green Voices Final Appeal To Defeat Job-Freeze Law

Text Of Pres. Green's Telegram

Washington, D. C.—Text of AFL President William Green's telegram to all members of Congress urging defeat of the conference report on manpower legislation follows:

TO THE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS
WASHINGTON, D. C.

IT SEEMS INCONCEIVABLE THAT HAVING REACHED A WAR STAGE WHERE IT IS CLEARLY EVIDENT THAT THE GERMAN ARMIES ARE DECISIVELY DEFEATED CONGRESS WOULD EVEN CONSIDER THE PASSAGE OF A BILL WHICH SMACKS OF SLAVERY.

THE WORKING MEN AND WOMEN OF AMERICA THROUGH THEIR SKILL AND SERVICE CONTRIBUTED LARGELY TO THE INEVITABLE DEFEAT OF THE GERMAN ARMIES. TO MAKE THESE WORKERS SUBJECT TO HEAVY PENALTIES AND TO IMPOSE UPON THEM A CONDITION WHICH APPROXIMATES SLAVERY AT THIS STAGE OF THE WORLD WAR IS UNJUSTIFIABLE AND INDEFENSIBLE.

I THEREFORE PROTEST IN THE NAME OF THE 7,000,000 MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AGAINST THE ADOPTION OF THE MEASURE PROPOSED BY THE CONGRESSIONAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE AND I APPEAL TO ALL MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO VOTE AGAINST THE CONFERENCE REPORT AND DEFEAT IT DECISIVELY.

WM. GREEN, PRESIDENT,
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR.

Most Dangerous Bill To Labor Headed For Congressional Approval

Washington, D. C.—AFL President William Green made a last-minute, dramatic appeal to Congress for defeat of the job-freeze bill agreed to by House and Senate conferees which is considered the most dangerous legislation against free labor in the nation's history.

Mr. Green declared the bill "smacks of slavery" and, to impose it upon the nation's patriotic workers at this stage of the world war, "when it is clearly evident that the German armies are decisively defeated," is "unjustifiable and indefensible."

While a bitter fight against the conference report loomed in both Houses of Congress this edition went to press, leaders of both parties predicted its adoption over the protests of labor and industry.

Senator Kilgore, of West Virginia, declared after meeting with labor and management representatives, that it was their unanimous belief that the measure would reduce war production instead of increasing it.

The Senate-House conference committee on manpower legislation which adopted the so-called "modified draft" report were stacked in favor of drastic compulsory legislation, it appears. The report was adopted over the objections of Senator O'Mahoney, of Wyoming and Rep. Short, of Missouri.

It makes War Mobilization Director James F. Byrnes supreme dictator over the nation's 50 million industrial workers, authorizing him to call on other Federal agencies to enforce his orders. Salient provisions of the bill are:

1—It empowers the War Mobilization Director to fix and maintain manpower ceilings in each state.

2—It authorizes him to freeze workers in their jobs, to shift workers from one job to another regardless of their wishes and to compel employers not to hire workers who fail to comply.

3—It imposes penalties of a year in jail, a $10,000 fine, or both for wilful violation of the law's provisions.

4—It empowers the War Mobilization Director to regulate hiring and re-hiring.

5—The bill prohibits voluntary resignations from jobs unless approved by the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, solicitation of workers by employers and the acceptance of jobs by workers in plants which are up to their authorized ceilings.

6—It authorizes the War Mobilization Director to set up "area" manpower ceilings for plants considered non-essential shall be zero, thereby putting them out of business.

Labor and management groups fighting to prevent Congressional approval of the conscripted measures were faced by the traditional difficulty of defeating a conference report sent by the further circumstance that the bill was reported acceptable to the White House.

While reports on President Roosevelt's attitude were unofficial, his repeated requests for compulsory manpower legislation dimmed hopes that he might be persuaded to veto the bill in the event that Congress adopts it.

GREEN NAMED JUDGE OF TREATY CONTEST

New York City.—William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, has been appointed one of the judges in the National Peace Treaty Contest, which will award $10,000 in war bond prizes for the best practical peace treaties which can be applied to the world at the end of the war.

A total of 100 prizes will be awarded for the best treaties of 1,000 words or less. The National Peace Treaty Contest opened on March 17 and will close midnight, April 15. All legal residents of the United States and Territories in the armed forces wherever they may be are eligible. National headquarters are at 350 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Vice President Harry S. Truman also will appear as one of the distinguished panel of judges who will decide the winning entries. Winners will be judged by how practical and how workable their plans and ideals are for the coming peace.

Plot To Aid Work-or-Jail Measure Charged By Labor-Management Group

Washington, D. C.—Charges that Administration officials conspired to stampede Congress into passing forced-labor legislation were made by the Labor-Management Policy Committee of the War Manpower Commission.

The charges were based on evidence brought to light at several hearings on the "voluntary" labor mobilization plan put into effect recently in New Bedford, Conn., while Congress was considering compulsory legislation. It was advertised as a "voluntary" plan, but under the usual WMC officials, without consulting labor or management, sought to force workers to shift from jobs to tire plants.

Workers rebelled at the tactics, and the champions of a forced-labor law, in and out of Congress, seized upon the New Bedford episode as "proof" that "the voluntary system has failed" and compulsory legislation was necessary.

However, the WMC labor-management committee in Washington, after a thorough investigation, concluded unanimously that the New Bedford episode was deliberately staged for its effect on Congress and not to solve the local manpower situation.

"Application of the 'forced release' program in New Bedford was for the purpose of lending support to the support of compulsory service legislation," the committee declared.

"We are convinced from the clear evidence, painstakingly reviewed during a half dozen long meetings, that there was an attempt to create a situation which could be called a 'failure' by voluntary method."

"Brass hats" operated behind the scenes on the New Bedford plan, which they sought to use as a "guinea pig," the committee said.

The committee called on "orders from Washington" and regulations which require the area manpower director to consult first with his local labor-management committee were ignored.

Actually, the New Bedford experience, far from demonstrating the failure of voluntary means, "proven conclusively that compulsion will not work and that war goods cannot be produced by remote control."

"The situation at New Bedford, when freed from bureaucratic coercion, can solve their manpower problems satisfactorily through voluntary community effort," the committee stressed.

"Our committee is unshaken in its belief that free men are more productive than forced labor.

"We are convinced that the lessons of the New Bedford case will have a salutary effect upon the country. Government officials are put on notice that they should apply compulsion only as a last resort and then only after qualitative steps have been taken."

The committee revealed, too, that it had refused to persuade Manpower Director Paul V. McNutt to revoke the New Bedford program, "wipe the slate clean and start on a fresh basis." McNutt later indicated he may do so if New Bedford violates its "security" substitute." Labor and management in that city are working on such a substitute now.

THE AFL PRESENTS . . . "Builders Of Victory"

Did you know that about 80 per cent of the Seabees, the Navy's fabulous construction battalions, were recruited from the building trades and metal trades unions of the American Federation of Labor?

Would you like to know more about the gallant war record of these sturdy union warriors who work as they fight?

Then listen to the AFL's new radio show called "Builders of Victory" which will be devoted to outstanding and dramatic episodes of the Seabees on the fighting fronts.

The first episode will be broadcast over the nation-wide facilities of the Columbia Broadcasting System April 7 at 3:45 P.M., E.W.T. Succeeding episodes will be heard each Saturday thereafter at the same time. Don't miss these thrilling radio shows!

AFL SCORES VICTORY IN CLOSE ELECTION

Lafayette, Ind.—The American Federation of Labor polled in a run-off election at the huge plant here of the Aluminum Company of America. In the poll conducted by the National Labor Relations Board, 1,522 employes voted for the AFL while the CIO mustered 1,475.

UNIONS TO OFFER TOUR TO PEACE DELEGATES

San Francisco, The Bay Cities Metal Trades Council wants to play host to the delegates to the United Nations Conference which will meet here April 25.

At the suggestion of Local No. 6 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the council is planning to invite the conference delegates to make an inspection tour of local shipyards.

It was pointed out that some of the foreign delegates may be interested in purchasing American-built ships and would like to see them made by high-speed American methods.

UNIVERSITY BACKS PLAN FOR NEW LABOR SCHOOL

Urbana, Ill.—Strong support has been evidenced for the recommendation of the Illinois State Federation of Labor that a department of labor education be established at the University of Illinois.

A. C. Willard, president of the university, said the school is definitely committed to this new line of education "which we believe will have the support of management as well as labor." The Illinois Legislature has been asked to appropriate funds to install the new department.

J. G. LUHRSEN NAMED TO R. R. RETIREMENT BOARD

Washington, D. C.—Acting on the recommendation of railway labor, President Roosevelt nominated Julius G. Luhrsen, executive secretary of the Railway Labor Executives' Association as labor member of the Railroad Retirement Board for a 5-year term.

He will succeed Lee M. Eddy, former vice president of the Telegraphers, whose term expired last August. Luhrsen's appointment is subject to confirmation by the Senate, but approval is expected to be unanimous.

MINNESOTA FED. WOOS FARMERS WITH PAID ADS

Minneapolis.—By advertising, the Minnesota State Federation of Labor is getting across its message that workers and farmers will have to stand together in the farm world.

The advertisements, picturing labor as agriculture's best customer, have been published in eighty daily and weekly rural newspapers and will soon appear in many additional farm publications. Emphasizing that more purchasing power for the workers makes them bigger customers for farm products, the Minnesota Federation says in the advertisements that "better wages for workers mean better incomes for farmers."